

3. Beyond Baudrillard



1. The Death of the Social

The scene of traditional Western philosophy as we know it today is composed of two major poles, the subject and the object. Subjects as we know them have active agency and act upon the other pole of the object. Objects have no agency in traditional thought, instead being simply being acted upon by subjects. Now the subject is not necessarily an individual, though it often is, but is rather an object like any other that has agency. A subject is an object that distinguishes itself from other objects by acting upon them beyond the mere logic of cause and effect. While we as individuals are categorised as subjects by this logic, though there are determinists who contest this, we can think up metaphysical situations in which anything can be a subject. All that has to be done is to give an object a sense of control. This paradigm can be traced back long before it was concretely theorised as a dichotomy by philosophers such as Descartes. It can be seen in the very structure of our language. In the structure of a sentence, there is a subject that acts through a verb on an object. The subject has a principle of action in language, without a verb there is simply no subject and thus no sentence. Structurally this means, as Orwell shows that the structure of language affects the way we think in his *Politics and the English Language*¹, that the subject-object dichotomy is ingrained in our thought process. Even if philosophically we were to construct a metaphysics that rejects this dichotomy, as so many thinkers of the post-modern milieu have done, the presence of some means of subject and object remains in our very thought process. It is a part of the standard image of thought.

Even if this dichotomy can be traced back so far in our collective consciousness, its philosophical justification is found in the work of the Enlightenment thinker Descartes. The very structure of his cogito, which he places as the basis for being, separates the mind and the body. He writes:

“I easily understand, I say, that the imagination could be thus constituted if it is true that body exists; and because I can discover no other convenient mode of explaining it, I conjecture with probability that body does exist; but this is only with probability, and although I examine all things with care, I nevertheless do not find that from this distinct idea of corporeal nature, which I have in my imagination, I can derive any argument from which there will necessarily be deduced the existence of body.”²

This may be seen as a separation of the subject into the source of agency within the subject, the mind, and that which is the extension of said agency, the body, but this separation of

¹ Orwell, George. 1946. *Politics and the English Language*. Vol. 13. London: Penguin.

² Descartes, René. 1641. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press.

mind and body leads to the conclusion of the metaphysical poles of subject and object. When Descartes uses the ontological argument for god's existence he concludes that there must be an exterior world, that god would not trick him, thus giving an exterior of objects for the body, in control of the mind, to interact with and manipulate.

Now there have been significant challenges to this dichotomy and Descartes' which deconstruct this particular formulation. Now particular formulation of it, some of which being provided by Baudrillard himself, all of this deconstruction is certainly justified, the dichotomy is based on faulty foundations and metaphysical essentialism, however, simply discarding it without making constructive use of it ignores so much of philosophical discourse. In particular, there is Baudrillard's seductive subversion of the dichotomy through his notion of the fatal strategy which posits we take the side of the object in theory. To understand this confusing position, we must first understand what he is reacting against, a vulgar humanism. This humanism emphasises the human subject as the key pole of this dichotomy, emphasising its utter control and dominance over objects. It posits the agency of humans as subjects in a world composed of objects, in other words, it places humanity above the rest of the world. This creates the traditional scene as Baudrillard calls it, where humans through their agency make rational decisions on how to change the world. To him, an esteemed anti-humanist, this is merely a facade created by political scientists to privilege humanity. Baudrillard is not anti-humanist in the mere sense that he rejects the concept of humanity, though he certainly does see it as being lost in the process of the simulacra, rather rejecting the emphasis of subjectivity in any sense. The scene of politics is a facade, but not one that can be simply challenged by revealing it as a facade. Baudrillard writes:

“All that capital asks of us is to receive it as rational or to combat it in the name of rationality, to perceive it as moral or to combat it in the name of morality. Because these are the same, which can be thought of in another way: formerly one worked to dissimulate scandal—today one works to conceal that there is none.”³

This is the third order simulacra, an image to conceal that there is no reality there. If we are to accept this analysis, as the challenging capital by stating the scandal merely reinforces its relations, we must come to conclude that we must either embrace the object or subvert it through being irrational ourselves. Both are the basis of what Baudrillard calls the fatal strategy, to sleep with the enemy and take the side of the object of seduction. He takes this position not necessarily out of some rigorously defined logic, but because he believes it will make theory more interesting, and more seductive. Through this approach, Baudrillard rejects the metaphysicians of old in a way so radical that it challenges the analysis of other

³ Baudrillard, Jean. 1981. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

post-structuralists. In *Forget Foucault*⁴, he sets his sights on Foucault and Deleuze, who in their analysis of power and desire respectively are said to reproduce the old capital analysis of the Marxists. The signs can be exchanged, the concepts only come to prominence now that they have died and become hyperreal. This is not to discard the truth value of both analyses but to say they are too perfect, too metaphysical. Desire has no place in the analysis of Foucault because it can be perfectly exchanged for power, there is no sign value. The micropolitics of Deleuze and Guattari, along with the associated resistance to Biopower seen in Foucault's later work, are said to symbolically model the forms they're resisting on a micro level. The anarchic war of institutions, the global civil war that Tiqqun talks of⁵ is itself an anarchy modelling the same anarchic flows of the micro. Baudrillard is the greatest critic of those who seek to make some new metaphysics revolutionary, though the fairness of the criticism can be disputed and will be further into this text and within the next part.

Regardless, a crucial aspect of Baudrillard's theory is that the object is by nature seductive. A key basis of this is that he claims the agency of the object, similar to the developments of recent object-oriented ontology and speculative realism. The introduction to *Fatal Strategies* displays his approach quite well

“In their stead, he seeks to locate a genuine revolution, on a scale or front that we— as the species-centric being par excellence—have not anticipated. Namely, the ‘insurrection of the object,’ which he describes as ‘a silent revolution,’ but the only one left now.’ The fate of the object is one strategy which, according to this book, has long languished unclaimed in the Lost & Found office of radical ideas; at least until now. And for this reason alone, it is a useful expansion of agency beyond the rather self-serving principles of the human subject. ‘Only the subject desires; only the object seduces’”⁶

Just as there is desire as an affirmative force in Deleuze, for Baudrillard this affirmative force is seduction. Now of course the desire of Deleuze is not localised to a constrained subject, in fact a key tenet of schizoanalysis is to create new subjectivities, but it is most certainly personal and subjective. Seduction rather takes the claim of agency away from the subject and gives it to objects, giving it dominance over the various subjectivities, to the extent of denying any sense of intelligible subjectivity separated from seduction. Let us draw from modern object oriented ontology for an example. The traditional, subject oriented, approach towards the object can be seen in the chair. Chairs are objects out there that we directly interact with and manipulate. We exchange them as commodities on a market, it is at the

⁴ Baudrillard, Jean, and Sylvère Lotringer. 2007. *Forget Foucault*. Los Angeles, Ca: Semiotext(E) ; Cambridge, Ma.

⁵ Tiqqun. 2010. *Introduction to Civil War*. Los Angeles ; Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Semiotexte.

⁶ Baudrillard, Jean, and Jim Fleming. 2008. *Fatal Strategies*. Los Angeles, Ca: Semiotext(E) ; Cambridge Mass.

mercy of subjectivity and desire. But if we are to take another example with much prevalence across history, the object of gold for instance, we find it is instead the object that dominates these “subjects.” Gold as a motive, or perhaps in its more modern and broad form the accumulation of capital, is one that has fueled the vast majority of wars, of social systems, etc. In its fetishization it seduces individuals into valuing it, its sign given an artificial importance. Now one may protest it is still up to individuals to give into seduction, after all the pursuit of gold for gold’s sake is a sacred cause in the Stirnerite sense. In Stirner we find that we can throw off the seduction of the object’s cause, instead basing our cause on nothing. But while Stirner’s egoism certainly will be useful in any notion of going beyond Baudrillard’s fatal strategy, seduction is more widespread than the mere world of causes. Rather the holding of conceptions themselves, in our self theory in the sense of For Ourselves! and McQuinn, is itself based on the seduction of different concepts. Take the previously mentioned Baudrillardian critique of Foucault and Deleuze’s affirmative conceptions of power and desire, these in their disappearance become more and more seductive. This disappearance of the concept, the transition through the stages from the real to hyperreal, is the direct root of seduction. As such to investigate how we engage in the fatal strategy and how we might subvert it, we must understand disappearance.

The disappearance of a concept comes with our categorization of the concept, through categorical analysis. In the posthumous work *Why Hasn’t Everything Already Disappeared?*⁷, Baudrillard makes the observation that by the precise and categorical analysis of an object we become further separated from what we were trying to conceptualise in the first place. At a certain point the concept disappears, so alienated from the signified that we lose the real. The first object of consideration here is the human, which after Foucault has revealed its historicism, Baudrillard shows its disappearance. Both Foucault and Baudrillard, each prominent French Nietzscheans in their own right, proclaim the death of the human as Nietzsche claims the death of god (though it should be noted that Stirner “killed” this pious atheism in Feuerbach before Nietzsche had even proclaimed the death of god,) yet while Foucault sees this death in the mere theoretical sense Baudrillard claims its full disappearance. His observations on the disappearance of the human can be said to be the radicalization of Marcuse’s *One Dimensional Man*⁸, the categorization of humanity has led to the death of its cultural existence. But whereas in Marcuse there is still a real of man, in Baudrillard we have lost humanity itself in the seduction of humanity. Through the conceptualization of power, desire, sexuality, etc we lose the real of the given notion.

Where the divergence begins between Baudrillard and the rest of the post-68 generation is in the concept of the simulacra. Baudrillard applies the semiotics of Derrida

⁷ Baudrillard, Jean. 2009. *Why Hasn’t Everything Already Disappeared?* London: Seagull Books.

⁸ Marcuse, Herbert. 1964. *One Dimensional Man : The Ideology of Industrial Society*. London: Sphere Books.

and Lacan to the cultural object, declaiming in the same vein as “nothing is outside the text” that nothing is outside hyperreality. In the text and the symbolic it is claimed we have lost the real, that we are forever alienated from grasping it. In hyperreality the real is lost within the movement of the simulacra, where even the most radical gestures are already conceived as copies of copies. They are never experienced outside of the context of the image of experience. Whereas Deleuze can dream of an outside, Baudrillard recognizes that in the process of creating an image of the outside we become trapped within the very thing we seek to escape. This is perhaps why Deleuze and Agamben recognize we can only conceive of an outside as a singularity⁹, it cannot be conceptualised. This view also puts Baudrillard at odds with the movement he was once associated with, the situationists. To the situationists the spectacle is the ultimate development of superstructure, where a sum of connected images and media mediate real connection and any proper view of the base.¹⁰ But to Baudrillard the base has disappeared, the concepts of both capital and subjectivity becoming indistinguishable from the seduction of their image. To Foucault and Deleuze, this means that their selected base—power, desire, or otherwise—is both perfectly exchangeable with capital and just as outdated. For Baudrillard we need something new, something radical.

From this more culturally nihilistic approach, Baudrillard proposes the fatal strategy in its totality. The fatal strategy is an approach towards theory that aims to create more seductive theory, it takes the side of the object. Instead of seeking to subvert seduction, though there is an object oriented subversion in his conception of reversibility, he seeks to amplify it. This strategy is a key influence towards the modern analysis and praxis, or rather anti-praxis, of accelerationism. Accelerationism is less of an ideology and more of a system of analysis, one pioneered by Land and the CCRU. While some posit acceleration as a liberatory process or at least one with the potential of liberatory futures, Land in his analysis is far more fatal. He recognizes no escape, and while for a time he held the sensibilities of a leftist that soon faded away with his new alignment with the neoreactionary current. This accelerationism in both its fatalism and sleeping with the enemy, taking capital’s side, must be countered with a resistance to Baudrillard himself. His approach must become the crucial area of contention for any liberatory project. For if a project cannot contend with Baudrillard’s critique it will only contribute to our current state of over-bloated scene of nothing philosophies.

Many upon reading this approach may be inspired, tired of philosophies that present a potential liberatory outside. This is what Baudrillard intends, he views the fatal strategy as the only revolutionary potential left, all others seduced by conceptions that have disappeared.

⁹ Agamben, Giorgio, and Michael Hardt. 2013. *The Coming Community*. Minneapolis ; London University Of Minnesota Press.

¹⁰ Debord, Guy. 1967. *Society of the Spectacle*. Detroit, Michigan: Black & Red.

Yet for many others there may be a sense of disappointment, a sense of being trapped within our cultural totality. If we are to theorise in good faith, we cannot put our hope back into a humanism or any revolutionary perspective of old. Rather as Baudrillard proposes the insurrection of the object we must propose an insurrection against the duality itself. We must realise the real of subjectivity and affirmation. This is not to affirm subjects, or any conceptual base of subjectivity, but to engage in a self affirmation that refuses to be subjectified in a Foucauldian sense. We can claim a real of subjectivity because we are immanent to our own being before any observation of the social. What we are becomes more and more obscured, incorporated into increasingly intensive conceptual systems, yet the real experience, of the gesture that doesn't conceptualise itself as gesture, remains. However we cannot conceptualise subjectivity, it must not become a new conceptual base to an ever-growing superstructure. As we pointed out briefly earlier, we can see from Stirner that it is up to us to be seduced in the first place. It is out of our individual creation and affirmation that we become seduced. We require affirmative defiance, a defiance that refuses to recognize the current state of things, refuses to play within its preexisting structures. The issue of desire and power is that they become conceptual bases to philosophical systematics of the social, no matter how historical or immanent they claim to be. To recover them, or at least their theoretical uses, we must localise affirmation to subjectivity, where we can then engage in insurrectionary affirmation. Baudrillard certainly shows the simulacrum of the social, but by locating resistance in the terrain of the subjective a way out becomes clear.

2. Against the Fatal Strategy

Baudrillard in his texts posits the death of the social as a totalizing form that we can describe as a scene, with perfectly defined characters and movements. This is for two reasons, the death of forms due to their over-categorization and the overall death of the real. The social is the scene of all interactions between subjects, it is the totalizing discourse that many in the post-structuralist milieu become trapped in as their theories become lost in a web of ever-exchangeable systems. Yet, to Baudrillard, this scene only exists in an attempt to hide the obscene and irrational reality that lies beneath. It is a third-order simulacrum, an image or form that hides the absence of such forms. More broadly, this movement from the real to the simulacra describes the phenomenon of hyperreality, which reveals the entirety of the traditional social scene as obscene. Baudrillard does not deny that there are social interactions between people, but he does show that we cannot posit a reality that codifies how those interactions take place. If we are to use more Foucauldian terminology we could state that the positing of the social, with its readily defined subjects and potentialities, is a subjectification. This presents a problem to those who seek to use potentially liberatory forces, such as the desire of Deleuze and the power Foucault, as these forms are fundamentally tied to a prior conception of the social. Now Foucault, despite Deleuze posits desire as the basis of the libidinal economy, an economy prior and more fundamental to the political economy of Marx. His broad descriptions of desire across the social through his schizoanalysis of the family, the state, capital, etc all posit a seemingly perfect explanation for every movement of desire. The same goes for Foucault, who in his definition of power posits it as a social form. This is found in his work *The History of Sexuality: Volume One* where he states:

“Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society.”¹¹

Power in Foucault, while certainly resulting from the realm of the personal, is a conceptual system theorised through genealogy. Foucault’s project is to describe various outliers within the social through genealogy, speaking on madness, punishment, sexuality, etc. Each thinker also posits their form as a potential liberatory one. Deleuze states we can deterritorialize out of the various micro-fascisms we find regulating desire. Foucault gives various resistances to the dominant form of power he observes in the world, biopower. These forms of resistance would go on to inform both the thinkers associated with Tiqqun and the post-anarchism of Newman. If these forms are located in the social, how can we posit any liberatory prospect? As was previously outlined, an insurrectionary subjectivity must be posited to resist

¹¹ Foucault, Michel. 1976. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1. New York: Pantheon Books.

Baudrillard's insurrection of the object. In short, we must go directly against the fatal strategy. To do this this insurrectionary subjectivity must be outlined, which will use the egoistic philosophy of Stirner to posit a subjectivity without basis. Along with this, these various liberatory potentials towards affirmation must be located within this subjectivity. Our goal is not to reconstruct a localised theory of desire and power, as that would be just to make a new dominant form rule the subjective, but instead to use the liberatory potential each form gives within a new context. Concerning the theories themselves and how they describe the social, their usefulness cannot be denied. What must be done with both of the analyses is to position themselves outside the totalized and lost social, instead repurposed to describe the subjective. This is not to fall into the same trap that Baudrillard in *Why Hasn't Everything Already Disappeared?*¹² describes. Rather power and desire must be used in the way Deleuze wished for philosophy to be done, with concepts used as tools that are used rather than the basis of metaphysical truth.

To engage in either project, the construction of liberatory potential in the wake of Baudrillard's critique and the use of Foucault and Deleuze's analysis in the subjective context, our vision of subjectivity must first be defined. To do this is to do what Baudrillard did to Foucault in *Forget Foucault*¹³, to out-Nietzsche Baudrillard. To do this involves perhaps even going beyond Nietzsche and instead turning to Stirner. Now this is not to say our goal of an insurrectionary subjectivity cannot be achieved by other thinkers, including some readings of Nietzsche himself, but Stirner goes perhaps the farthest and is the easiest to use. Now to posit this subjectivity is not to posit a subject, after all, Stirner, Levinas, Foucault, Deleuze, etc already reveal how the subject has been constructed. The subject is not a priori but rather comes from various processes both internal and external. Along with this, Baudrillard shows that by constructing these subjects we create the equivalent of humanism whenever we take their side. Our goal is not some Feuerbachian humanism, a simple reaction against the fatal strategy to turn back to naive fetishization, but rather to subvert this paradigm altogether. This is to construct an anti-humanist notion of subjectivity, one fit for the insurrectionary potential we are seeking. Subjectivity is also not a concept in the typical sense here, as to posit a conceptualised vision of subjectivity would be just to create a new pole that falls to the same attack Baudrillard does towards the traditional subject. Rather our notion of subjectivity is a placeholder, a placeholder for the ultimately indescribable nature of subjectivity. While a placeholder, this is not a thing in itself or noumena in the Kantian sense, as that would be to place a transcendent subjectivity above us. No, this is not a placeholder for something placed above us, but for a basis that grounds us, that we are immanent towards. Just as all concepts are ultimately floating in the sense that they can never be

¹² Baudrillard, Jean. 2009. *Why Hasn't Everything Already Disappeared?* London: Seagull Books.

¹³ Baudrillard, Jean, and Sylvère Lotringer. 2007. *Forget Foucault*. Los Angeles, Ca: Semiotext(E) ; Cambridge, Ma.

perfectly assigned to a signified, a notion of subjectivity that tries to establish limits or boundaries ultimately boxes and restricts subjectivity. The most radical philosophy we can have towards subjectivity is to not have a philosophy at all, to assert a lack of definitive assertion. Lack in this case allows a freedom of assertion for subjectivity; it gives the possibility of liberatory potentials.

This subjectivity is best stated by Stirner through his notion of the unique and the creative nothing, the supposed end of philosophy. If we are to take philosophy as the creation of conceptions, as Deleuze and Guattari do¹⁴, our approach to subjectivity must be anti-philosophical. Baudrillard has already revealed the seduction of concepts, which leads to the victory of the object and the fatal strategy, thus we must focus on the pre-conceptual. Before we conceptualise subjectivity into a Freudian ego, done both through Foucault's subjectification and through individual creation, there is a non conceptual nothingness. This is not a nothingness in the sense of a non-being, but a creative nothingness. The creative nothing is the nothing from which we create everything, from which we conceptualise and stratify our world. Subjectivity here becomes a totality of all experience, as ultimately all experience and all creation is in the context of subjectivity. Creative nothingness is the most radical of anti-essentialism, as it posits that at the basis of subjectivity there is no foundation, nothing we can grasp upon to ground our approach. If we are unable to posit a conception on the basis of subjectivity, it cannot be posited as a conception or object at all. With this lack of basis, the claim that objects can have some proper foundation also becomes faulty. Stirner comes to explain this through his notion of the unique. The unique is the idea that names don't name their signified, they are the equivalent of placeholders for the fundamentally indescribable. To be clear, this is not a repositioning of the Kantian thing in itself or noumena, which states that this indescribability is something transcendent to human knowledge. Rather the unique is simply something that a signified cannot be placed upon without reducing it, it posits every signifier as floating. What the unique subjectivity describes could be said to be immanent to subjectivity, in contrast to Kantian transcendence, but that would be to reduce it all the same. Stirner shows what he means by the unique here:

“Stirner names the unique and says at the same time that “Names don't name it.” He utters a name when he names the unique, and adds that the unique is only a name. So he thinks something other than what he says, just as, for example, when someone calls you Ludwig, he isn't thinking of a generic Ludwig, but of you, for whom he has no word.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 1996. *What Is Philosophy?* Columbia University Press.

¹⁵ Stirner, Max. 2012. *Stirner's Critics*. C. A. L. Press.

When Stirner talks of the unique individual, in this case Feuerbach for whom he is responding to, he names it but at the same time posits that names don't name it. This is the crux of the unique, an object when posited as an object always reduces what the object is attempting to describe. Any attempt at a philosophy of individuality that posits an objective subject will always get caught in this problem and will fall to the fatal strategy. Now of course the subject is not the only thing within the unique's range of application, the assassin of philosophy sets its sights on all objects. This is due to universal application of subjectivity, as the creative nothing in its creation produces the stratification of objects within our subjective experience. It does not matter if we are subjectified, or if much of our categorizations come from facticity, as ultimately applying these preexisting categories is an act of creation in itself. Stirner writes:

“What Stirner says is a word, a thought, a concept; what he means is neither a word, nor a thought, nor a concept. What he says is not the meaning, and what he means cannot be said.”¹⁶

When the philosopher, in this case Stirner, creates a work of philosophy, they work in concepts. But what they mean is not a concept, the concept always reduces subjective expression. One creates concepts as philosophical weapons, just as we are doing now, but their actual danger comes from the subjective attacks they represent. All objects are thus in essence floating, which means that their seduction can be displaced through the non-conceptual subjectivity they are always within the context of. Stirner extends an ethic from these anti-foundationalist notions, that of egoism. This ethics crucially is not a morality, but rather a path forward towards action without a foundation. To be an egoist is to base one's cause on nothing, to not be beholden to idols and sacred causes. It is not narcissistic egotism, which posits an artificial ego as above all others, but rather subverts the idea of a fundamental ego at all.

From our vision of subjectivity we can recover the theories of Deleuze and Foucault from the disappearance of the social. Deleuze in his philosophy, along with Guattari in this case, created the conception of schizoanalysis which defined itself through its attempt to de-oedipalize and observe the general trends of desiring production across society. This approach set out to create a materialist psychology, one grounded on an analysis of the libidinal economy that subverts the systems of Marxism and psychoanalysis. Schizoanalysis, as the name implies, works through the idea of the schizophrenic and its desiring production. Unlike Lacan and Jameson, who posit schizophrenia as a tendency within capitalism that displaces identity, Deleuze and Guattari view schizophrenia as the limit of the social¹⁷.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 2009. *Anti-Oedipus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. New York: Penguin Books.

Baudrillard has two main critiques of this approach, that it is both too perfect and that it posits a wider force that has already disappeared. To start with the latter, as to answer the former we have to answer the latter, Deleuze and Guattari outline a very idiosyncratic notion of desire and the social. They are in no way humanists, or theorists that posit a standard view of the subject. Thus Baudrillard has no real way to give a critique of their social as a scene of norms, as Deleuze and Guattari can be seen just as Baudrillard as philosophers of obscenity. What is more obscene than the schizophrenic or its power wielded in schizoanalysis? Yet where Baudrillard takes issue is when they posit desire as a totalizing social phenomena and even moreso when desire is posited as a potential liberatory force. Desire is the new explanation for everything, just as economic forces were to Marx. Baudrillard claims that schizoanalysis' account of desire in its perfection and totalization is symbolically equivalent with both the theories of Foucault and Marx, thus remaining stuck in metaphysics and ultimately not providing any innovation. Now while this goes too far in many respects, Deleuze and Guattari's work is after all one of the most innovative philosophies, it does correctly critique some of Deleuze and Guattari's systematic tendencies. Just as the traditional scene of the social in liberalism, with its rational actors and concept of freedom, posits a transformative actor in the humanist subject, schizoanalysis posits desire as a main transformative actor. While its analysis is far more advanced and in depth, it still acts as something to be subverted by Baudrillard's fatal strategy.

Within Deleuze's wider philosophy, outside of his creation of schizoanalysis with Guattari, we find the problem of systematisation and universalization appearing. The plane of immanence for instance, despite Deleuze and Guattari's best efforts to posit it as preconceptual, is itself a conception placed as a basis. Now this conception does not have the same issue as Spinoza's universal substance, as immanence is declared to be immanent to itself. There is no necessary transcendent substance to be declared to be immanent, rather it is an absolute immanence. Immanence is not of concern here, as we can pose that subjectivity requires immanence as any transcendent notion of subjectivity creates a transcendent subject of some form. This is the issue with most phenomenology, as it posits a transcendent notion of subjectivity through the transcendent subject. Deleuze and Guattari rightfully observe that all transcendence can be reduced to immanence, immanence must always be prior to transcendence, yet what is of concern is the conceptualization of immanence through the plane of immanence. A similar issue occurs back within schizoanalysis with the body without organs. Within the work of Deleuze and Guattari concepts often mirror each other in function. The body without organs is the symbolic equivalent of the plane of immanence, the former being the basis of desire and the latter being the basis of philosophy. With both occurrences the solution to reposition these theories from Baudrillard's criticisms, though it should be clear at this point that Baudrillard's

critique does not hold the weight it seemingly has, is to position it within our notion of subjectivity.

These affirmative forces of desire and concept creation, both described through the conception of the machine, can be described not as affirmations of a preconceived social but instead as the affirmative potential of subjectivity. This tendency can already be seen within the works of Deleuze, most crucially *Anti-Oedipus*. Deleuze and Guattari write:

“Nothing here is representative; rather, it is all life and lived experience: the actual, lived emotion of having breasts does not resemble breasts, it does not represent them, any more than a predestined zone in the egg resembles the organ that it is going to be stimulated to produce within itself. Nothing but bands of intensity, potentials, thresholds, and gradients.”¹⁸

This lived experience is where we are grounding our overcoming of the fatal strategy, as this lived experience is crucially before the conceptualization of said experience. If we are to place desire in this context we can properly claim it as revolutionary, or more accurately insurrectionary, once again. Desiring production is not necessarily transformative, but ours is if we make it so. This insurrectionary basis within everyday life can of course be observed in Stirner, but also within the works of Vaneigem. His work *The Revolution of Everyday Life* is crucial for any understanding of this idea.¹⁹ Vaneigem perhaps has the most adept understanding of insurrectionary gestures, of pure life and what it means to construct situations. All other formulations are either caught up in a systemization of what the situation is (Debord), or are obscured by the failure of 68. In Vaneigem there is the simplest but most radical approach available: to live and to refuse. Also of use is Culp’s idea of a Dark Deleuze, which tries to get the same insurrectionary potentials out of Deleuze’s work in opposition to numerous normalising interpretations²⁰. Here he rejects the primacy of the rhizome, which obscures any possibility of escaping cybernetic discourse.

Foucault experiences a similar issue to Deleuze when faced with Baudrillard’s criticisms. Famously Foucault refused to reply to *Forget Foucault*, though it can be assumed that he did not take it kindly or merely dismissed it. Power and desire to Baudrillard have both disappeared along with the social. Both are exchangeable, hence why each author doesn’t touch on the object of the other. Foucault saw no real relevance to the notion of desire, viewing it as overly metaphysical in relation to the historical form of power. Deleuze, while discussing power, always sees it in the manner of captured desire. His notions of the control society and the apparatus of capture follow this tendency. There is no room for

¹⁸ Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 2009. *Anti-Oedipus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. New York: Penguin Books.

¹⁹ Vaneigem Raoul. 1967. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*. London (85 Regent’s Park Rd, Nw1 8Xa): Action Books.

²⁰ Culp, Andrew. 2016. *Dark Deleuze*. U of Minnesota Press.

desire in Foucault because its place is already taken by power. Power is a social form, it is a specific phenomenon within society. It, like desire, ultimately creates the equivalent of a universalizing subject within the social. The perfection of power becomes its downfall to Baudrillard. However much like Deleuze, we can observe a tendency towards our subversive subjectivity. This can be seen in Foucault's conception of biopower. Unlike Deleuze this is not posited as a potential revolutionary force, it is still very much a social phenomena that can be resisted. However it is specifically positioned within this lived subjectivity, analysing how power creates willing subjects through the processes of subjectification and normalisation. The everyday is made the subject of analysis as it is analysed how power influences these decisions. A crucial aspect of this is the concept of self regulation, which Foucault famously explains through the idea of the panopticon. The current social systems we find ourselves within increasingly operate not through punishment, but through the idea of surveillance. We now regulate ourselves, just like the prisoner of the panopticon, unaware if we are watched or not watched. This positioning of power on the subjective level allows for subjective resistances to power, which Foucault was beginning to outline towards the end of his life. These potential strategies have been used by the theorists of post-anarchism, most importantly Newman. Now Baudrillard cannot be blamed for this as all he had at his disposal was *Madness and Civilization*²¹ and the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*²², both of which present a far more systematic and "archeological" approach. Foucault's work changed significantly throughout his life, refuting many of Baudrillard's initial criticisms. Biopower, despite the death of the social, can still be used as a very useful tool within our analysis because it is not presented metaphysically. However it can never represent a totality, it is always porous. What must be done from here, much like with Deleuze, is to expand on these struggles against biopower.

As was previously noted, Newman's post-anarchism is a very useful tool for the insurrectionary potential we are seeking. This is of course deeply informed by Stirner, positioning it within the approach we are seeking to find. Newman in his work *From Bakunin to Lacan* analyses the place of power in post-structuralist milieu, crucially how these theorists struggled to find points of resistance²³. In this book he makes a critique, similar to that of Baudrillard, of Deleuze and Foucault. However this was crucially from a subjective position. Through Lacan's notion of the real, which he breaks from its supposed disappearance through language, he finds what he calls an outside. This outside is no supposed physical outside, such as the Walden of Thoreau or the communes of *Call*²⁴, but is instead immanent

²¹ Foucault, Michel. 1961. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. London: Routledge.

²² Foucault, Michel. 1976. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1. New York: Pantheon Books.

²³ Newman, Saul. 2001. *From Bakunin to Lacan : Anti-Authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books.

²⁴ Anonymous. 2004. *Call*

to us at all times. Culp also makes very important contributions here with his essay “Insurrectionary Foucault”²⁵ in which he draws upon Tiquun to characterise Foucault’s work as a genealogy of insurrection. Much like how Deleuze has been standardised and robbed of all radical potential by many theorists, Foucault has become a watered down neoliberal through the dismissal of his discourse on rebellion and ethics. Both present a vision of the outside distanced from the discourse of various right and left accelerationisms, which remain in the shadow of Baudrillard’s fatal strategy. Instead it provides a new ground for connection, affirmation, and overcoming.

²⁵ Culp, Andrew. 2010. *Insurrectionary Foucault*